

## Beyond Intervention

The Housing Registrar's intervention has been withdrawn. Read the letter to members from Mr. Anthony Hardy, Registrar of Housing Agencies, on p 8.

### The Chairperson



Shirley Faram

SEHC is the first registered housing provider or association to have an intervention order since the Housing Registrar was established in 2005.

It is a history-making achievement that we really did not want to achieve or be remembered for.

The intervention has been challenging for us all. Directors and staff have worked hard to meet the demands of the intervention.

The “buck” has stopped with the board and we are mindful of the uncertainty that the intervention created for members and staff.



Ian McLaren

The intervention order by the Housing Registrar has been a challenge for the board and staff.

For the staff it has created uncertainty about their future because the future of SEHC depended on the capacity and willingness of the board to respond and the Housing Registrar's judgment of this response. At worst, members could have lost an independent and autonomous co-



operative but this, thankfully, would not have impacted on security of tenure. There would not, however, necessarily have been job security for staff who have served the co-operative for many years. All the staff look forward to taking the co-operative Beyond 2012—beginning now and going beyond the International Year of Co-operatives (IYC) in 2012.

On p 2 you can read about IYC 2012 and on p 4 you can read about Beyond 2012.

I urge all members to review the Services Charter on p 7. The original charter was adopted by the board. In revising the charter the board decided that it should go to the AGM on the 21 November 2011 for approval—as it encapsulates organizational and member relationships and obligations. [Ian McLaren](#)



## International Year of **COOPERATIVES 2012**



United Nations Headquarters, New York, USA

[The United Nations General Assembly](#) will launch the International Year of Cooperatives (2012) at the UN General Assembly Hall on Monday, 31 October 2011 in New York. [The United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs \(UNDESA\)](#), in collaboration with [the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives \(COPAC\)](#), is leading the preparations. The International Year of Cooperatives, highlighting the contribution of cooperatives to socio-economic development, particularly their impact on poverty reduction, employment generation and social integration. With the theme of **“Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World”**, the Year seeks to encourage the growth and establishment of cooperatives all over the world.



Parliament House, Canberra, ACT

The Australian launch of the International Year of Co-operatives will be on Tuesday 22 November 2012 at Parliament House, Canberra, Australian Capital City. The launch has been organised by the IYC Australian National Steering Committee and the Secretariat for the Committee which is provided by Social Business Australia. As a result of the Committee's work there will be a coin, a commemorative set of stamps and the ABS year book will feature co-operatives. Mutual Business Leaders. Contact for the IYC Secretariat: Melina Morrison, Phone—02 9345 0074 Mobile—0410 902

Authorised by Shirley Faram,  
on behalf of the SEHC Board,  
October 2011.

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For global news about  
co-operation and  
co-operatives:

<http://www.thenews.coop>



# 10 YEARS OF JOY

The board took Tenancy Worker Joy Haines for lunch at the Dandenong Pavillion on the 30 September 2011 to celebrate her ten years with SEHC.

In congratulating Joy, Chairperson Shirley Faram said, "I'd like to congratulate Joy for 10 years of service and I look forward to the next 10 years."

L to R: Shirley Faram (Chairperson), Joy Haines (Tenancy Worker) and Ian McLaren (General Manager)



## 2011 Lease

The 2011 Lease is now available for members. All members are encouraged to review the new lease and compare it with their existing lease. Initially, members interested in obtaining and reviewing the 2011 Lease should contact the Tenancy Worker, Joy Haines. A copy will also be uploaded to the SEHC web site.

The 2011 Lease was developed by a Lease Sub Committee and endorsed by a general meeting of members on 25 July 2011.

Members are not required to change from existing leases to the 2011 Lease. It is hoped, however, that members will recognize that the 2011 Lease is superior to existing leases.

The reality is that any leases are subject to the provisions of the Residential Tenancies Act.

### PRIVACY

**SEHC is committed to protecting your privacy and complying with all applicable privacy laws. If you have any questions or comments about our privacy practices, we can be contacted at PO Box 7141, Dandenong, 3175. 03 9706 8005. Fax 03 9706 8558**

# SEHC BEYOND 2012



The intervention by the Housing Registrar and the upcoming International Year of Co-operatives in 2012 have created an opportunity for the co-operative to renew and reinvent its co-operative values and principles and, therefore, how the co-operative and its board relate with the members. We call this Beyond 2012— a renewal and reinvention that will go beyond 2012.

CEHL is organizing a national co-operative housing conference in 2012 and the board has agreed to sponsor the conference.

## Strengthen Community, member control and services within the co-operative

A co-operative is a community of members who unite to achieve a common benefit. For members of SouthEast it is secure and affordable housing. The strength of any co-operative depends on the capacity and willingness of its members to participate and how the culture of the co-operative reflects and reinforces community and participation. The key to participation is members wanting to participate—attending meetings, speaking at meetings, standing and voting for the board and completing member surveys.

Democratic control is a principle of co-operation. The basis for strengthening member control is to improve accountability to members e.g. a public record of board meetings, the development of accessible and understandable organizational performance standards and ongoing communication with members about the co-operative and its board through the Housing Futures newsletter, the SouthEast web site and member meetings.

Membership control has been strengthened by the board deciding that significant member policies should be subject to member ratification—rather than board decision. A complaints policy which had already been endorsed by the board was submitted to and approved by a general meeting on 25 July 2011. The Services Charter will be submitted to the AGM on 21 November 2011.



Welcome to the first column of Flotsam and Jetsam readers wherein you will find some useful and useless but interesting information and content and sometimes a chuckle. Feedback on any article and suggestions are welcome .

### Cactus and Desert.

About a month ago, I got a cactus. And a week later, it died. I got really depressed because it was like, damn, I am less nurturing than a desert—  
Demetri Martin

### Why is it blue for boy babies and pink for girls?

Researchers say that in Anglo-Saxon Britain, in the fifth and sixth centuries, boy babies were more prized than girls. The belief spread that ever-present evil spirits would visit the cradle and harm or carry off a boy child. Blue, a power colour because it came from the sky, would scare away these malevolent forces.

At that time, girly babies didn't warrant a protective colour. Later, in Germany, a widespread legend held that girl babies sprang from a pink rose, and it became customary to dress baby girls in pink. That custom merged with the British one of dressing boys in blue and the fashion of blue for boys and pink for girls spread to other parts of the Western world.

### Chicken and mushroom stir-fry

Chinese dried mushrooms can be used. They need to be soaked in hot water for 30 minutes

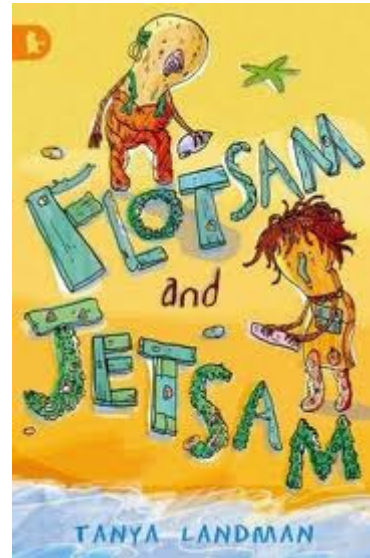
400 g chicken breast meat; 1 onion, chopped; 1 garlic clove, crushed; 1 tablespoon olive oil; 2 celery stalks, chopped; 1 cup green beans, sliced; 1 cup mushrooms, sliced; 1 tablespoon ginger root, finely chopped; 1 tablespoon soy sauce, low salt; 1 cup chicken stock; 2 tablespoons cornflour; Garnish 1 tablespoon chopped parsley.

1. Remove fat and skin from chicken. Slice meat into strips. 2. Heat oil in wok and stir-fry onion, garlic and meat. (3) Add vegetables and flavourings. Stir-fry 2 minutes. (4) Blend cornflour with stock and pour over meat and vegetables. Simmer 2 minutes. Garnish with parsley. **Serves 4 Fat per serve 8 g**

### Annual General Meeting

7:00—9: p.m. 21 November 2011

Dandenong Club



**"Am I dying or is this my birthday?" - Lady Astor**

As she lay dying at 85, the wealthy socialist and first female member of the British House of Commons awoke to find herself surrounded by her entire family. She pondered the possible explanations for the gathering with the same acid wit that had immortalized her verbal sparring matches with Winston Churchill. A passionate advocate of women's rights, Astor spoke for her entire sex when she declared: "We are not asking for superiority for we have always had that; all we ask is equality."

### Disclaimer

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# ROCHDALE AND CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING



The Rochdale Pioneers

The ideas of the founders of the **Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers** have influenced the co-operative movement throughout the world. The Rochdale Pioneers are remembered for their co-operative store in Rochdale but the Pioneers wanted to reorganize the world's economic and social system—including co-operative housing. The Laws and Objects of the Rochdale Pioneers (1844) state:

The objects and plans of this Society are to form arrangements for the pecuniary benefit, and improvement of the social and domestic condition of its members, by raising a sufficient amount of capital in shares of one pound each, to bring into operation the following plans and arrangements.

The establishment of a store for the sale of provisions and clothing, etc.

The building, purchasing or erecting a number of houses, in which those members desiring to assist each other in improving their domestic and social conditions may reside.



The 'store', as the Co-operative was affectionately known as in the Rochdale area until the late 1900s, first opened for business on 21st December 1844, initially for two nights per week, selling four key items; butter, sugar, flour and oatmeal. The Pioneers continued to trade from the Toad Lane premises until 1867, when they opened their new Central Premises, built at a cost of £13,500.

The "store" is now a co-operative museum.

## Housing Support

The Senior and Disability Project began in August and finished in October 2010. All 160 members received a postal survey and there were phone call follow-ups with 106 members—resulting in 40 completed surveys (25% of the total membership). Of the 40 completed surveys, 16 were aged 65 and over and of those 9 were disabled people other than seniors and 7 were seniors with a disability. This represents 10% of the total number of households and 40% of those who completed the survey.

A Housing Support policy and program is being developed to provide an organizational focus on existing and future needs of members. The policy and program will recognize the importance of providing support to members to maximize their remaining at home. Members will be consulted next year.

# Our Services Charter

## *Our Mutual Roles and Obligations*

### Our Mission Statement

To increase and provide secure, affordable and environmentally sustainable long term community housing managed by and for low income people that delivers excellent services to improve the quality of housing of residents.

SEHC and members are expected to be honest, fair, courteous, helpful and reasonable and to comply with the *Co-operatives Act*, the Rules, *Residential Tenancies Act*, *Privacy Act*, and SEHC's Member Manual and the International Co-operative Alliance's principles.

### Our Services

*SEHC is committed to security of tenure for all members and is also committed to accountability and transparency in service provision through:*

- keeping the membership informed through the newsletter, General Meetings, Member Forums, our web site and other methods as required;
- consulting with members on significant matters affecting the co-operative and/or tenancy
- submitting significant changes to the co-operative and/or tenancy to a general meeting of members
- providing a high quality service which will be continually improved;
- notifying members in advance regarding inspections and trades people visits;
- developing, maintaining and publicly releasing organisational performance indicators
- endeavoring to answer requests on the spot and respond to enquiries within two working days; and having the office staffed 8.30am to 5.00pm, on normal working days.

### Our Members

*We ask that our members accept the obligations of membership and the autonomy and independence of the co-operative through*

- advising SEHC in writing of any change in tenancy details;
- maintaining their property in good order
- paying rent on time
- not performing works at their property that are not in keeping with the requirements of the *Residential Tenancies Act* and the *SEHC Member Manual*;
- letting us know if requiring an interpreter;
- being available at agreed times for inspections and trades people visits;
- understanding and respecting the legal compliance requirements of SEHC
- attending meetings of members; and
- providing and completing all relevant SEHC tenancy data information and all surveys.
- Advise if you have a complaint, provide the date and times of the circumstances you wish to complain about and specify how you would like to see the complaint resolved

**This is a revised draft of the original Services Charter. The board has directed that the Services Charter be included on the agenda for the AGM on the 21 November 2011 so that members have the opportunity to approve a Services Charter. Proposed amendments are welcome. If members could submit these before the AGM, then, these could be circulated to all members. For queries about the Services Charter and any proposed amendments please contact the General Manager. Ian McLaren.**



18 October 2011

Dear Members

Over a year ago my office received a number of complaints from tenants about a new lease that South East Housing Cooperative (SEHC) had introduced. When I attended your AGM in 2010 I learned first hand of the level of concern. It was clear that I needed to investigate.

After investigating I issued instructions to SEHC to sort out the lease that was causing so much concern. I also recommended that SEHC work with Common Equity Housing Limited (CEHL) to improve its governance and day to day management.

In August I had the pleasure of receiving a report that showed the improvements that had been made by SEHC working with CEHL. It also told me of the strategic alliance that has been struck between the two agencies. Because of these improvements I have recently informed the board the formal instruction I issued would be withdrawn and that SEHC would return to standard reporting to the Housing Registrar.

I am pleased with the professionalism the board and management of SEHC have displayed in resolving the issues. The positive outcomes achieved to date are due in large part to the commitment of both parties.

SEHC and its management have worked hard to create a lease that meets both your needs and those of the Department of Human Services. The lease has been agreed on by all parties and remedies the concerns of members who contacted my office. Staff have had complaints management training and now understand the importance of a consistent and well managed complaints system. Publishing board meeting minutes publicly and the introduction of a bi-monthly newsletter will improve the communication between the board, staff and members of SEHC.

The consultation on the new lease demonstrated SEHC's commitment to providing opportunities to participate in decision making processes. Your views and opinions are being heard. The SEHC board and staff are committed to improving their operation for your benefit. I urge you to use the available channels to provide input– attend a meeting, complete a survey, join a working party, nominate to be part of the board, join a committee.

I would like to thank you for your patience whilst this matter was resolved.

Yours sincerely

Anthony Hardy

Registrar of Housing Agencies